

REMARKS

Applicant thanks the Examiner for the very thorough consideration given the present application.

Claims 1-10, 12-16, 18-21, 23 and 25-27 are now pending in this application. Claims 1, 15 and 20 are independent. Claims 1, 12-13, 15-16, 18-21 and 23 have been amended. Claims 11, 17, 22 and 24 have been cancelled, claims 25-27 have been added.

Reconsideration of this application, as amended, is respectfully requested.

Drawing Changes

Applicant has amended Figure 2 to bring Figure 2 into closer conformity with the specification. A substitute sheet of drawings, as well as a red-ink drawing illustrated the changes, are enclosed for the Examiner's consideration.

In Figure 2, the lead lines for reference numerals 104a and 106a have been moved to indicate the forward ridges of the modules 104 and 106, respectively. This arrangement is described in paragraph [0018] of the specification and was originally illustrated in the drawing figures filed on March 4, 2004. Further, reference numeral 102 has been added to Figure 2, to be consistent with the description in paragraph [0018] of the specification and Figure 3.

Amendments for the Specification

Applicant has corrected a grammatical mistake in paragraph [0021]. Specifically, “seven” has been changed to --six--. This brings the specification into conformity with the arrangement illustrated in Figure 2.

Rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 112

Claims 13 and 19 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

The Examiner asserts that the recitation that the “slots lock the multi-port modules to the patch panel frame after the multi-port modules are fully inserted in these slots,” as recited in claims 13 and 19, is indefinite. The Examiner notes that it is unclear how the slots 103, 105 having a regular configuration can lock the modules.

Upon further review, the Applicant agrees that the recitations in claims 13 and 19 were unclear. Therefore, amendments have been made to claims 13 and 19 to more clearly recite the locking feature.

Specifically, the claims now recite the phrase “wherein the patch panel frame comprises openings adjacent to the slots to lock the multi-port modules to the patch panel frame after the multi-port modules are fully inserted in the slots.” The openings are illustrated in Applicant’s

Figure 3. In Figure 3, an opening is located adjacent to each of the slots 105. The openings would have the ability to receive a resilient tab, which extends from the multi-port module. Therefore, after one of the multi-port modules is fully slid into one of the slots 105, the tab of the module could engage in the opening to prevent the module from being removed from the slot 105.

In light of the amendments to claims 13 and 19, reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection are respectfully requested.

Allowable Subject Matter

The Examiner has indicated that claims 11, 12, 17 and 18 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Applicant thanks the Examiner for indication of allowable subject matter. Allowable claim 11 has been cancelled and limitations similar thereto have been incorporated into independent claim 1. Further, allowable claim 17 has been cancelled and limitations similar thereto have been incorporated into independent claim 15.

The difference between the limitations added to the independent claims and the allowable limitations of claims 11 and 17 resides in the characterization of the angles of the slots. Allowable claims 11 and 17 stated that the slots were at the first and second angles, meaning that

the access of the ports of the modules would be parallel to the slots formed in the patch panel frame. Applicant believes that the modules could be formulated with a slightly angled port configuration, wherein the access of the ports would be somewhat tilted relative to the tabs which engage the slots in the patch panel frame. Therefore, Applicant has recited that the slots are configured at a third angle and a fourth angle to accommodate the first and second plurality of multi-port modules, respectively. New dependent claims 25, 26 and 27 recite that the third angle is the same as the first angle and the fourth angle is the same as the second angle.

It is believed that all of the independent claims now recite a feature which should be considered allowable by the Examiner, based upon the noted allowable subject matter. As such, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 102/103

Claims 1, 2, 4, 5, 8-10, 14-16 and 20 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Clark et al. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claim 3 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Clark et al. in view of Below et al. Claims 6, 7 and 21-24 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over

Clark et al. in view of Puetz et al. These rejections are respectfully traversed.

Each of the independent claims 1, 15 and 20 has been amended to recite that the patch panel frame includes slots configured at a third angle and a fourth angle to accommodate the first and second plurality of multi-port modules, respectively. It is respectfully submitted that this arrangement is not illustrated in the prior art of record. Moreover, this arrangement is highly related to the allowable subject matter indicated by the Examiner. As such, it is respectfully submitted that these rejections have been rendered moot.

Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of these rejections are respectfully requested.

CONCLUSION

All of the stated grounds of rejection have been properly traversed, accommodated, or rendered moot. Applicant therefore respectfully requests that the Examiner reconsider all presently outstanding rejections and that they be withdrawn.

It is believed that a full and complete response has been made to the Office Action, and as such, the present application is in condition for allowance.

Should there be any outstanding matters that need to be resolved in the present application, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact Mr. Scott L. Lowe (Reg. No. 41,458) at the telephone number of the undersigned below, to conduct an interview in an effort to expedite prosecution in connection with the present application.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and further replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. § 1.16 or under 37 C.F.R. § 1.17; particularly, extension of time fees.

Respectfully submitted,

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AMENDMENTS TO THE DRAWINGS

Attached hereto is one (1) sheet of corrected drawings that comply with the provisions of 37 C.F.R. § 1.84. The corrected drawings incorporate the following drawing changes:

Figure 2 has been amended to add reference numeral 102 and to correct the lead lines for reference numerals 104a and 106a.

It is respectfully requested that the corrected drawings be approved and made a part of the record of the above-identified application.